

# THE CREATION OF MAN

## INTRODUCTION

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- The study of man is called “anthropology” from the Greek words *anthropos*, meaning “man,” and *logos*, meaning “word” or “discourse.”
- Hence, anthropology is the study of man
- There is a difference between biblical anthropology (with only 1 view of man) and sociological/cultural anthropology (with many views of man)
- This study of the doctrine of man will consist of the biblical data (biblical anthropology), not scientific (cultural anthropology)
- Only a study of God’s revelation in His Word can furnish a complete answer to the timeless question, “What is man?”
- If man is what the Bible says he is, then he cannot know himself fully apart from the Bible
- Unredeemed man cannot study himself with any accuracy

*Jeremiah 17:9 ~ The heart is more deceitful than all else And is desperately sick; Who can understand it?*

*Romans 1:18-32*

- Thus, the true study of the doctrine of man can only come from Scripture

## THE ORIGIN OF MAN

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- Perhaps no subject is more widely debated today than the question of how man originated

### Atheistic/Naturalistic Evolution

- The theory or origins began with Charles Darwin and has been largely adopted by society today...it is largely an attempt to explain the origin of matter and life apart from God
- It theorizes that several billion years ago chemicals in the sea, acted on by sunlight and cosmic energy, formed themselves by chance into one or more single-celled organisms, which have since developed through beneficial mutations and natural selection into all living plants, animals, and people
- None of this requires the idea of God...in fact, it attempts to explain the origin of all life on earth entirely apart from any supernatural involvement
- Thus, in this theory, a combination of atoms, motion, time, and chance has fashioned what we currently have
- Major tenets:
  1. The universe resulted from a big-bang explosion
  2. Life began completely by chance when a single-cell appeared from non-living matter
  3. All other living organisms have developed from those early, simple forms of life which gradually increased in complexity...a development which also produced man
- The process of evolution in formula: Mutations + Natural Selection x Time = Evolution
- There are serious implications if this view of man is true...namely, if there is no God who has created the world then man is not accountable to God and there are no moral absolutes

## Theistic Evolution

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- Theistic evolution holds that God directed, used, and controlled the processes of naturalistic evolution to “create” the world and all that is in it
- This involves the idea that God began the process, using existing material, and remains in oversight of the process
- It includes the idea that the days of Genesis 1 were ages and that evolutionary processes were involved in the “creation” of Adam
- Theistic evolutionists generally accept the findings of science and then try to fit the evolutionary hypothesis into the Bible (i.e. the bases on which theistic evolution rest are the Bible and science)
- Thus, theistic evolution tries to ride 2 horses (evolution and Creation) which are going in opposite directions
- Not surprisingly then, theistic evolution is rejected by both naturalistic evolutionists and biblical creationists
- There are several serious problems with theistic evolution:
  - If the human race evolved, then Adam was not a historical person and the analogy between Christ and Adam in Romans 5:12–21 breaks down
  - It requires an allegorical approach in interpreting Genesis 1-2
  - To suggest that mankind came from a non-human ancestor cannot be reconciled with the clear statement of man’s creation in Genesis 2:7

## Progressive Creationism/Day Age Theory

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- This is really just another form of theistic evolution
- Those who hold to this view perceive God as being involved not only at the beginning of the process but at various points along the way
- They believe God stepped in to create at the major stages of life throughout geologic history (i.e. the vertebrates, the birds, the mammals, and man)
- But he also permitted and used naturalistic evolution processes throughout the long periods of geologic time
- This theory is supposedly a more serious attempt to reconcile the Bible with science in that it assumes the old age of the earth according to the teaching of science and yet at the same time, it acknowledges the direct creation of man and animals according to Genesis 1–2
- This theory is based in part on Psalm 90:4 and 2 Peter 3:8 in rejecting a literal six-day creation:
  - *Psalm 90:4 ~ For a thousand years in Your sight Are like yesterday when it passes by, Or as a watch in the night.*
  - *2 Peter 3:8 ~ But do not let this one fact escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like one day.*
- In this view, the days of creation are not to be understood as 24-hour days but as geologic ages
- This view says that creation was the result of a series of separate acts of God in which what He made further developed on its own (microevolution)
- Several problems result from this theory:
  - In Exodus 20:10–11, God draws an analogy between a person working 6 days and resting on the 7<sup>th</sup> and God creating 6 days and resting on the 7<sup>th</sup>...this doesn’t work if the days are not 24-hour days
  - This theory would mean there was death before the Fall because it involves a long period of time
  - The creation of plants bearing seeds prior to the creation of land animals poses a problem in that some seeds depend on insects for pollination and fertilization.
  - How could plants, created on the 3<sup>rd</sup> “day,” survive if the sun was not created until the 4<sup>th</sup> “day?”

## The Gap Theory

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- This view states that a “gap” of time exists between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2, a gap that could have lasted millions of years
- Supposedly, in Genesis 1:1, God created a fully functional earth with all animals, including the dinosaurs and other creatures we know only from the fossil record...this was the original creation of God – perfect in every way
- Then between verses 1 and 2, Satan rebelled in heaven and was cast out which “ruined” the original creation...his rebellion brought about its destruction and eventual death and the earth was reduced to its “formless and void” state
- At this point, God started all over again, recreating the earth in its paradise form as further described in Genesis
- The purpose of this view is to hold to the old age of the earth (an accommodation to science) and yet to understand the words of Genesis 1 and 2 literally
- Problems with this view:
  - It requires death and destruction before the Fall
  - The plain reading of Genesis 1 does not at all intimate a length of time between the first two verses
  - The phrase “formless and void” is assumed to be evil but the same phrase is used in Job 26:7 and Isaiah 45:18 without that connotation
  - Genesis 1:31 says God declared His creation to be “very good” – a statement difficult to square with the theory that evil already existed because of Satan’s fall in the “gap”

## Sudden Creationism (Biblical)

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- Definition: God created all that exists directly and instantaneously (fiat) out of nothing (ex nihilo)
- Creation was a recent event of 6,000 to 10,000 years ago and the days of Genesis 1 were 24 hours in length
- The basis for the 24-hour creation days is the biblical account of Genesis 1 and 2; thus while science may contribute to our understanding, it doesn’t control or change our interpretation of Scripture in order to accommodate its findings
- So while it is true that the Bible is not a textbook on science, this does not mean that it is inaccurate when it reveals truth which belongs to the arena of science
- God created man directly; Genesis 1:27 is the general statement, while Genesis 2:7 provides additional detail concerning how God created man. The statement in 2:7 also explains God’s manner of creating—He created man out of the dust of the ground
  - *Genesis 1:27 ~ God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.*
  - *Genesis 2:7 ~ Then the LORD God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.*
- According to this account man and woman were both created directly by God; they did not evolve from lower forms of life
- Thus, man’s creation was special and unique...he was created on the last day, the climax of God’s creation; at the conclusion of man’s creation, God noted, “it was very good”
  - *Genesis 1:31 ~ God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.*
- It is also important to note that Christ acknowledged that God directly created man:
  - *Matthew 19:4 ~ And He answered and said, “Have you not read that He who created them from the beginning made them male and female,*
- If man evolved, he is only a higher form of animal, without moral sensibility or accountability; Scripture, however, presents man as a moral creature, accountable to God.

- Support for sudden creationism:

1. The work week is patterned after the 7 days of creation

*Exodus 20:11* ~ For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh

2. Believing the biblical account of creation is a matter of faith

*Hebrews 11:3* ~ By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible.

3. The Hebrew word for “day” (*yom*) always refers to a 24 hour duration when used with a number

*Genesis 8* ~ The 150 days of the flood

*Exodus 24:18* ~ The 40 days Moses was on Sinai

*Numbers 13:25* ~ The 40 days the spies searched out Canaan

*Jonah 1:17* ~ The 3 days Jonah was inside the great fish

4. “Morning and evening” terminology, which occurs over 100 times in the Old Testament, supports a 24-hour connotation

*Genesis 1:5* ~ God called the light day, and the darkness He called night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day.

5. The catastrophic flood can correlate the fossil evidence with a literal interpretation of Genesis

6. God could have created the earth with a superficial appearance of age or history

*Genesis 1:12* ~ Fruit trees were created fully grown bearing fruit with seed

*Genesis 1:20-25* ~ Animals were created mature

*Genesis 1:26-30* ~ Adam and Eve were created as adults

*Genesis 1:15-17* ~ Stars were created with light shining on the earth

- Note: Progressive creationists and theistic evolutionists absolutely cannot allow the doctrine of the appearance of age at creation. They argue that for God to create with the appearance of age would be deceptive and God is not deceptive

## CHARACTERISTICS OF MAN’S CREATION

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### It was Planned by God

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- The act of creating man was based on the deliberate counsel of God
- Man was no afterthought in God’s creative work but the result of deliberate forethought on the part of the Godhead

**Genesis 1:26-27** ~ Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

## **It was the Culmination of God's Work in Creation**

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- Creation was incomplete without man
- In fact, after God created man He then said that everything He had made was very good

**Genesis 1:31** ~ God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day

- Thus, man and woman were created as the pinnacle of God's creation
- This is evident from the fact that mankind is God's representative in ruling over creation, showing that he is set above the rest of creation

**Genesis 1:28** ~ God blessed them; and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

**Psalms 8:3-8** ~ When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, The moon and the stars, which You have ordained; What is man that You take thought of him, And the son of man that You care for him? Yet You have made him a little lower than God, And You crown him with glory and majesty! You make him to rule over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet, All sheep and oxen, And also the beasts of the field, The birds of the heavens and the fish of the sea, Whatever passes through the paths of the seas.

- This shows the significance of man...the crowning point of God's creation!

## **It Involved Two Facets**

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- First, God created Adam from the dust of the ground

**Genesis 2:7** ~ Then the LORD God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being

- The word "formed" describes the work of an artist...like a potter shaping an earthen vessel from clay, so God formed man from clay
- The Hebrew for "man" (*'ādām*, where we get "Adam") is related to the word for "ground" (*'ādāmāh*)
- Second, God created Eve from the man's side

**Genesis 2:18, 21-23** ~ Then the LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him" ...So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh at that place. The LORD God fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man, and brought her to the man. The man said, "This is now bone of my bones, And flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, Because she was taken out of Man."

- The man Adam (*ish*) named his wife "women" (*isha*) because she had been taken out of his side...she had her source in him
- The root of the word *isha* is "soft"

## THE IMAGE OF GOD IN MAN

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### Definition

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- The “image of God” or *imago Dei* is a term describing the uniqueness of humans as God’s creatures

*Genesis 1:26-27* ~ Then God said, “Let Us make man in **Our image**, according to **Our likeness**; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” God created man in His **own image**, in **the image of God** He created him; male and female He created them.

- Thus, Adam and Eve are said to be created in God’s image and likeness
- All of creation up to this point has been merely a prelude to what would happen at the end of day 6...the creation of the human race was the central object of God’s creative purpose from the beginning
- A significant change in the creation process occurs with the creation of man and woman in the image of God
- “Then God said” (vs. 3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 24) has previously been followed by “Let there be...” (3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 24)
- The language “let it be done” expresses an impersonal yet sovereign decree that immediately brought things into existence; they are mandates issued to no one in particular
- Never before has God said, “Let Us make” anything
- But in vs. 26, the phrase “Then God said” is followed by personal pronouns: “Let Us make man in Our image”
- God was personally and intimately involved in the creation of man

This speaks of the creation of Adam in terms that are uniquely personal. Scripture deliberately employs such pronouns in order to stress God’s intimate connection with this aspect of His creation. It establishes a personal relationship between God and man that does not exist with any other aspect of creation...He has no personal relationship with any of those things in the same sense He does with humanity. All those things were created by God through His fiat decree, and they began to exist because He ordered them to. But there is never a hint of any intimacy or personal identification between God and those things. God’s relationship with humanity is unique in all of creation.

John MacArthur, [The Battle for the Beginnings](#), 159-60.

- The plural *Us* introduces the plurality of relationships in the Godhead
- Although the plural *elohim* hints at it, the plural pronoun *Us* constitutes unmistakable evidence to the Trinity
- While the full revelation of the Trinity is not found here, it lays the groundwork for that which is described later in the New Testament
- All 3 members of the Trinity were involved in creation:
  - Father was the Originator – Gen 1-2
  - Son was the Mediator – John 1:1-3; Col 1:16
  - Spirit was the Executor – Gen 1:2
- “in Our image, according to Our likeness” = the image of God in man is what makes man unique
- Two words used:
  1. “image” (*tselem*) = semblance, statue, copy, model
  2. “likeness” (*demuth*) = similitude, pattern, shape

- These terms are not distinct (i.e. one expressing spiritual similarities and the other expressing physical similarities)
- These terms are parallel and synonymous for the purpose of emphasis
- They emphasize the fact that man has been made in the very image of God
- The same two words used in Genesis 5:3...Seth was not identical to Adam but was like him in many ways  
*Genesis 5:3 ~ When Adam had lived one hundred and thirty years, he became the father of a son in his own likeness, according to his image, and named him Seth.*
- Although these terms do not define what this image is, they show that God is the original of which man is the copy (but not an exact replica)
- This is what makes man distinct from every other created animal
- So what does it mean that man is made in the image of God?
- The definition must include that which is unique to humanity and not shared by animals
- **A possible definition: *Man is a personal, rational, emotional, spiritual, eternal being with a moral responsibility***
- Central to this definition is the concept of personhood (i.e. that which is capable of relationships and fellowship)
- God is essentially a God of relationships
  - That is why God said it was not good for Adam to be alone
  - That is why God created man to have a relationship with Him
- The seat of God's image is found in man's immaterial being
- Thus, the image of God in man involves the ability to:
  1. Bear the Creator's Image – i.e. to be personal, to have a moral consciousness, a consciousness of others, a consciousness about God; to reflect the incommunicable attributes of God
  2. Propagate Life – i.e. to be fruitful and multiply, to procreate
  3. Receive Divine Blessing – i.e. to be the recipients of God's kindness and well-being
  4. Rule Creation – i.e. to exercise dominion over the rest of God's creation

It may be defined, in summary, as the totality of man's higher powers that distinguish him from brute creation

J. Barton Payne, *The Theology of the Older Testament*, 227.

[The likeness of God] is what defines the human being's unique identity. It is the whole reason God took such a personal interest in the creation of this particular species. It explains why the Bible places so much stress on the fact of God's hands-on creation of Adam. He fashioned this creature in a special way – to bear the stamp of His own likeness. Man was made in the image of God. That sets him apart from every other creature in the physical universe.

John MacArthur, *The Battle for the Beginnings*, 163.

Being made in the image of God is usually understood to point to the sense in which we are like God. Though He is the Creator and we are creatures, and though God transcends us in being, power, and glory, nevertheless there is some sense in which we are like Him. There is some analogy between God and us. God is an intelligent and moral being. We are also more agents equipped with a mind, a heart, and a will. These faculties make it possible for us to mirror God's holiness, which was our original vocation.

R. C. Sproul, *Essential Truths of the Christian Faith*, 131.

## The Image of God and the Fall

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- In every aspect of life, some parts of the image of God in man have been distorted by the entrance of sin in to the world

In the fall of mankind, something ghastly happened. The image of God was severely tarnished. Our ability to mirror His holiness has been greatly affected so that now the mirror is fogged.

R. C. Sproul, Essential Truths of the Christian Faith, 132.

- Terminology showing how the Fall affected the image of God in man:

**Genesis 6:5** ~ Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

**Colossians 1:21** ~ And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds,

**Ephesians 2:1-3** ~ And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, <sup>2</sup> in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. <sup>3</sup> Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.

**Ephesians 4:18** ~ being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart;

**2 Corinthians 4:4** ~ in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God

- But, although the image of God was severely marred in the Fall, the following verses indicate that it was not obliterated:

**Genesis 9:6** ~ Whoever sheds man's blood, By man his blood shall be shed, For in the image of God He made man

**1 Corinthians 11:7** ~ For a man ought not to have his head covered, since he is the image and glory of God; but the woman is the glory of man

**James 3:9** ~ With it we bless our Lord and Father; and with it we curse men, who have been made in the likeness of God

## Implications of the Image of God in Man

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1. We must remember for what we were designed: An intimate relationship with the Lord and an earnest desire to reflect his greatness

**Psalm 16:11** ~ You will make known to me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; In Your right hand there are pleasures forever.

**Psalm 27:4** ~ One thing I have asked from the LORD, that I shall seek: That I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, To behold the beauty of the LORD And to meditate in His temple.

**Psalm 63:1-5** ~ O God, You are my God; I shall seek You earnestly; My soul thirsts for You, my flesh yearns for You, In a dry and weary land where there is no water. <sup>2</sup> Thus I have seen You in the sanctuary, To see Your power and Your glory. <sup>3</sup> Because Your lovingkindness is better than life, My lips will praise You. <sup>4</sup> So I will bless You as long as I live; I will lift up my hands in Your name. <sup>5</sup> My soul is satisfied as with marrow and fatness, And my mouth offers praises with joyful lips.

**Psalm 73:25-26** ~ Whom have I in heaven but You? And besides You, I desire nothing on earth. <sup>26</sup> My flesh and my heart may fail, But God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.



2. The image of God in man provides the basis for how we treat one another
  - Although man is sinful, there is still enough of the image of God in man that to murder or speak against another man is an attack on the part of creation that most resembles God
  - Fallen man is given the reality of the image of God as the basis for social conduct
3. Salvation through Christ is the means by which God recovers the marred image of God in man

*Romans 8:29 ~ For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren;*

*2 Corinthians 3:18 ~ But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.*

4. When Christ returns, the image of God in man will once again shine forth as He intended it

*1 Corinthians 15:49 ~ Just as we have borne the image of the earthy, we will also bear the image of the heavenly.*

*1 John 3:2 ~ Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is.*

## **A Concluding Caveat**

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- Should being made in the image of God cause us to focus on our worth, value, and significance?
- In a sense, yes...mankind is distinct from animals and this distinction should be emphasized
- In a sense, no...it should never be emphasized to the point of deemphasizing God's greatness...but we are still creatures